1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

against the government, white men, or other Indians with whom the ethnographer was also 123
friendly. Above all the ethnographer (as well as his wife) sought to adopt a permissive attitude toward the people. Conventionness was definitely shunned and it was only after a high degree of familiarity and confidence had been attained that any attempt was made to enforce elementary hygiene by stopping indiscriminate spitting in the tent or floorless [515]
cabin. At about the same time some attitude had to be taken with reference to the problem of alcohol. In one or two episodes alcohol released so much aggression and nuisance in two [158]
men (aggression which tended to manifest itself toward the ethnographer), that drinking began to pose a serious problem. The ethnographer, therefore, informed his host that as far as he, the ethnographer, was concerned he would not join any more drinking parties that fall or winter. The host, Old Man, was somewhat chagrined and regretful for what had occurred but no further brewing was done for several weeks. It may be pointed out that this episode, except for instituting a brief period of strain, did not seriously impair rapport where this relationship had previously been established with individuals.

All field work was conducted in English and no interpreters were employed. The author, together with his wife and family of two children, ages two and four, lived first in Lower Post, the summer residence of the Kaska Indians, and then travelled with one group to its winter trapping area. Three months were spent in a winter settlement containing four Indian families.

Field procedure, as much as possible, followed the method of participant-observation. During the summer the author and his wife attended Indian dances and participated in many other cultural activities, including two potlatches, several gambling games, and a meat packing trip. In addition Indian camps were frequently visited and people were made welcome whenever they chose to visit the home of the ethnographer, which was located close to the hub of the trading post. In the winter, visiting was greatly increased because of the fact that all life was conveyed in a small settlement where interpersonal contacts were frequent. During this lapse period the writer also sponsored Indians hunting, fishing, and traveling. He also assisted them in a number of other cultural undertakings, like house building, toboggan construction, and trapping. Participant-observation obviously involved making notes of all ethnographically significant details which came to the writer's attention. Where observation presented problems, questions were noted and their answers sought by means [124]
of direct questioning.

Behavior manifested in the social interaction between the ethnographer, or the members of his family, and Indians was also carefully observed. Upon analysis these relationships proved to be revealing in instances of both positive and negative transferences noted in informants. An effort was also made to remain conscious of transferences established on the part of the ethnographer. To guard against bias these had to be taken into account when analyzing data derived from the objects of such relationships.

A "personality data sheet" (hereafter referred to as Pokets sheet) was kept for those 124
individuals with whom the ethnographer came into close and frequent interaction. The sheets contained simply of dated verbatim or abstracted transcripts of remarks and conversations expressing attitudes, wishes, and complaints. Folktales brought out in casual con-

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

342 porary winter use. In summer such camps rarely contain heating appliances but in winter a stove is always used. Food, clothing, and bedding are commonly stored at the sides and back of a wall tent.

361 Since the dwelling forms so far described are often temporary and frequently moved,
342 the Indians have, to a considerable extent, systematized the procedure of making camp. Either a man or woman may set up camp; sometimes both cooperate in the task. The first
[514 objective is to find a level piece of ground. Former campsites are generally avoided as is the
515] brush close to such a site, since this area has probably been used for toilet purposes. If the site selected is not already free of underbrush, it is cleared. The branches are cut off close to the ground and the stumps dug out. Next poles must be found. Poplar saplings, which are naturally provided with strong forks at convenient intervals, are preferred as supports for the ridge pole. The ridge pole is generally a slim, straight, red spruce. After these poles have been cleaned of branches, and, in the case of the ridge pole, of rough bark, they are transported to the camp site. The front and rear poles, designed to support the ridge pole, are here sharpened with an ax. In this process the circular trunk is tapered to a point by being axed on four surfaces. The pole is then thrust into the ground until firmly anchored. The tent is slipped over or tied to the ridge pole and the latter fitted into the forked supports.

Camp making presents different problems in a spruce forest lacking poplar. Spruce trees do not have strong forking branches. Hence, instead of being supported in a forked stick, the rear of the ridge pole is sometimes lashed or nailed to a conveniently located spruce tree while in front of the tent two spruce saplings are crossed, thrust into the ground, and lashed. The ridge pole is then placed into the crotch. In winter, when the ground is frozen, a tent is erected with poles which are simply crossed and lashed without being anchored in the ground.

352 After the tent is erected, the ground inside the dwelling and immediately in front of the entrance is covered with spruce brush. The brush is placed with the thicker end of the branches extending in one direction—either toward the back or side of the tent. Subsequent branches are partially thrust under the brush already laid.

512 During fair weather, if people stop traveling in the early part of the day, tents are not erected until nearly nightfall. Fire, however, is made immediately and sometimes brush is put down to make sitting on the ground more comfortable.

342 *Tent frames.* We come now to relatively more permanent shelters. A tent frame consists essentially of a four or five strip wall tent set inside four walls made of horizontal poles. The walls are a little over two feet high and usually contain a door. In summer, tent frames of lumber are sometimes used in Lower Post but generally tent frames are made of logs and used primarily as winter dwellings by a family which lacks a cabin. They are usually constructed by men; a widow, however, may build her own tent frame. The following observations give the procedure followed in tent frame construction.

9:23:45 (Old Man's Place). Hans Donnelly used green jackpine poles, averaging about four inches in diameter, for his tent frame. He cut the poles about one-eighth of a mile from the campsite and packed them home on his shoulder. His brother Donald (14) fitted the poles and put them in place. The corners were joined in bowl shaped trenches which were chinked with moss

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Moccasins and mittens are usually decorated by being trimmed with strips of raw or tanned fur (rabbit, fox, or beaver) or by the addition of an embroidered floral design. Slipper moccasins may be decorated with a second tongue of white caribou hide or a piece of colored velvet sewn to an underlying moosehide or canvas tongue. The cuffs are sometimes bordered with embroidered pinked black velvet or dark blue doeskin cloth about an inch wide. The principal embroidery stitches are the outline, cross, and chain stitch. The first two are used for floral designs, while the latter is employed to embroider borders along the upper and lower edges of the cuff trimming on slipper moccasins. Since the war it has been difficult to obtain glass beads, so that beadwork designs on moccasins have been largely replaced by silk embroidery. Native and even purchased parkas are trimmed around the hood and cuffs with fox or wolverine fur, the latter being preferred for this purpose because it does not frost. In general, clothing decoration is limited.

Men shave once or twice a week. Some of the younger men several times sought to encourage mustaches during the period of field work, but only two older men permanently displayed this feature. Men's hair is cut by anyone who owns shears and clippers. In winter the hair is allowed to grow long and thick, and the only attention it receives is a casual morning combing.

Women do not comb their hair while traveling, but in camp and at the trading post the younger women exhibit considerable consciousness of their coiffures. A favorite headdress is to wear the hair rolled over the forehead and sometimes all around the head (Pl. 5, a and b). The rolls, however, are uneven and wisps of hair are always falling loose, even the ribbon or rag used to keep the roll in place being exposed at many places. Many young girls comb the hair straight to the sides and allow it to fall over the neck (Pl. 3). Older women dress the hair by braiding it and putting it up at the back of the head, or by parting it on one side and pinning it at the sides with bobby pins and barrettes.

Cosmetics gaining favor include lipstick, powder, nail polish, and perfume. Since the local selection of lipstick shades is limited, no effort can be made to match it to the shade of complexion. The same lack of matching enters into the use of nail polish, which is often crudely applied and not given sufficient chance to dry. A popular amusement of girls is to paint the fingernails of men, boys, and very young children. Perfumes are in great demand among girls and women. Cosmetics begin to be used at about the age of thirteen or fourteen; older women, beyond the age of thirty, are little interested or experienced in this behavior.

ROUTINE OF LIVING

Discussion has ranged through the principal economic techniques by which individuals adapt to the environment to secure the satisfaction of their needs. Certain residual needs, rest, cleanliness, and elimination now remain to be considered. Following this material we will examine the effort and motives which underlie the technical activities that have been described.

In summer young people tend to rise late, after ten or eleven o'clock, and seldom go to sleep before midnight. Unmarried boys keep even later hours; with darkness assembling in some camp to play cards, strum guitars, and wait until the older people have gone to sleep; then they begin to tease the unmarried girls. On a night when there is a dance, young mar-

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

ried couples, often with children, seldom go home until well after midnight, while unmarried people remain abroad until three or four o'clock in the morning. Older people as well as very young children retire and rise early. 512 513

In winter everyone tends to retire early in the long northern night, and people seldom arise before the sun—about nine o'clock in the morning. On the trap line or while traveling earlier rising obtains.

Indians retire fully clothed, except in summer, when moccasins and outer clothes are sometimes removed by the younger people. In winter, an extra sweater and dry moccasins may be donned before going to sleep as additional protection against cold. Following a day of winter travel, people are always careful to hang moccasins, socks and duffel in a warm dry place where these garments will have a chance to dry thoroughly. Despite full awareness of danger from burning, people frequently place damp moccasins too close to a fire causing them to scorch. 513

People sleep on the back or side and always cover their heads with blankets or eiderdowns. In summer this habit serves as a protection against mosquitoes, while in winter it is imperative for warmth. According to many people's admission, the Indian tends to be a light sleeper. In summer one hears frequent complaints of having been unable to sleep due to the sounds of trucks, crying dogs, or young people "running around."

A person seldom washes more than once a day and then it is upon arising. The hands, arms, face, and neck are generously lathered with soap and rinsed in a washbasin. Bathing is rare, except in summer when boys and girls may go swimming. Nevertheless the people appear clean and emit no offensive body odor. Their clothes and hair, however, smell of wood smoke. Little attention is paid to head lice and nits, most children being afflicted by these pests. Sometimes washing with gasoline is used to get rid of body lice. One very old woman was observed to search her clothes for lice which she would crack with her teeth and eat. A few young people were seen to clean their teeth upon arising, but the extent of this practice seems limited. 515 ● [p.42]

Extreme reticence marks the function of elimination. When in a group, a person will never announce that he is going to the toilet but says "I go out," or else simply slips away unobtrusively. Such a departure never meets with comment. People also avoid looking when they see a man or woman going off into the brush alone, and the uncleared toilet area near a camp is generally avoided except for its purpose. Although young men will urinate and defecate in the presence of one or more friends of their own age and sex, urinating is always accomplished by facing away from another person, thereby concealing the genitals. Men urinate in a standing position. Women are much shyer than men and always go a considerable distance into the brush to perform these bodily functions. While adults will never urinate or defecate in the house, an exception is sometimes made for very young children who, in cold weather, are permitted to urinate in a tin can. Children are also not obliged to move as far into the brush to eliminate as adults, and when very young often do so only a few steps from a camp or cabin. People always avoid urinating on a trail; instead they turn to one side, even when wearing snowshoes. Adults were reported to defecate two or three times a day. Twigs or moss are used to clean the anus. 514

No shame is attached to spitting or clearing the nose. Many men spit constantly and 515

1: Honigman: E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

515 do so anywhere except in a house containing a lumber floor. In their homes, people who chew tobacco or take snuff generally expectorate into a small tin can containing an inch of water which is kept standing under the bed. Members of either sex are often seen bending from the waist and studying a stream of mucuous for signs of blood. Both sexes generally clean the nose by blowing it between the thumb and index finger, then wiping the hand on the side of the trousers or dress. Nose picking is frequent.

461 The English word "work" has restricted significance among the Kaska, since it is almost
464 exclusively applied to hiring out to white men for wages. Having out for woodcutting, lumbering, freight handling, and working for government survey parties, is seldom undertaken except in case of necessity. Duties outside the society which require special abilities, such as piloting river boats, are far more satisfactorily regarded by the Indians. Since the completion of the Highway, opportunities for such work are no longer available. During the building of the airport, a number of men hired out to contractors and this period is looked back on with considerable pleasure, chiefly because of the excellent remuneration and the gifts (food, cigarettes, and liquor) that were received. Women do not hire out for wages, although some women earn a little money making dog packs and moccasins to order for white trappers.

461 "In general Indian men find it far more pleasant to be their own supervisors in the performance of their own socially patterned tasks than to hire out and work for either white men or other Indians. While certain of these necessary duties are more or less congenial to specific individuals, no evidence could be obtained of tasks which were generally regarded as onerous or unpleasant. In several interviews Nitla saw the Indian man's typical round of activities as a somewhat futile and painful way of existence. He tended to pity himself and compared the Indian's life to that of the white man who "just sit down one place." On one occasion he said: "By goodness, man hard time. Move the camp around . . . go after camp. I go hunt around that way. Make fire, hunt. Sometime get no moose. Second time hunt moose again. No moose. Woman set snare, bring rabbits, meat. Sometime pack berries home. Cook, mix, eat. Another man hunt moose. Who lucky for game, get moose. Pack home. Give that man a piece of meat. After, people move camp. Make the dried meat. Sit down. Soon finish game. Hunt the moose again . . . woman find porcupine sometime. Find two. Clean 'em. That man want porcupine. Kids he send them. Give half sometime . . . Hunt moose, two men apiece each. Woman stay, just watch the camp. Have to go a long way to shoot the moose. Sometime lost moose . . . Oh, hard luck! He's stuck. He keep one dog, hunt
[192] porcupine. Dog he find porcupine. He not find porcupine, nothing to eat one day. Sleep. Kids he soon crying . . . Mother mean. Hell! My goodness!"*

461 The principal incentive for accepting work with white men or other Indians (as in
465 housebuilding) is the need to earn money for summer living following a poor trapping season. Men who have had a successful trapping period are, of course, completely uninterested in hiring out. Nick Lang said frankly that he disliked working for wages because such work

* It must be noted that Nitla is referring to the way of life of the Frances Lake Indians who, in an area of high prices, cannot get sufficient fur to buy a winter's supply of food and so are highly dependent on game for subsistence. This in turn curtails their opportunities to trap. Thus they are inextricably caught in a vicious circle.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

159 fifty. I became frightened and yelled to my brother as loud as I could. My brother came back with a gun. He fired and a wolf dropped right behind me. Every one of them fell as my brother fired. That stopped the pack. My mother used to warn us children not to go out at night. She told us if we went out after dark, the last thing people would hear would be our yells when an eagle carried us up in the air.

After a while I went to Ross River to live with my mother's sister and her husband. This was the first year that the trader had started a post on an island in the river. Four years later they moved the post a half-mile to the Pelly River. I remember it was winter and we went there with toboggans, the people dragging it because there were few dogs then. There were many Indians camping at the post. The storeman, Dan, had bunks in the house for the Indians. When we got there we saw many things. That year we stayed at the post for two nights. The storeman promised to raise me when I was ready to live with him.

159 538 At this time my mother told me many stories. She told me about a woman who could never snare any gophers but would come home empty-handed and eat lice. She grew weaker and weaker. Finally, the lice started coming out of her nose. The people thought that she must have swallowed them without chewing and the lice continued to live inside her body. [58] Finally the woman died. When I was small my mother had many lice. People that time could never get rid of them; they didn't even try, but just picked and chewed them. My brother always used to eat marrow with a scissors. He was only five years old. One cold day, the scissors froze against his lower lip. He cried for his mother and they put boiling water on the metal to free it. Later water came out of his lip.

159 Soon I started trapping for the first time. I had about twelve traps, including ten iron traps that Dan gave me. We went to Pelly River and I caught ten martens. We came to Pelly Banks, where there was a small post run by Mr. Mail. Here I bought a .22. I was going to buy a big gun, but my brother told me it would be too heavy. Towards spring my uncle died from a hole in the side of his body through which rotten stuff poured. He thought that, because he had taken away a man's gun, somebody was making bad medicine for him. The man had owed him some money. It was April when he died and we were living in an open camp. They took him to Pelly Banks, where the white people insisted on building a coffin for the body.

In the summer my aunt went to Ross River, remembering Dan's promise to bring me up. Dan took me away from my folks and brought me to his home across the slough. He was going to raise me because he had no son. I was wearing ragged clothes. Dan and another man threw away my clothes. They bathed me and gave me nice things to wear. My aunt cried but I didn't. I was satisfied and figured I was going to live good. The next morning I began to help Dan plant spuds. My mother missed me and I could hear her crying every evening on the island across the slough where many Ross River Indians were living. She was really my aunt, but just the same as my mother. The Indians were living on store grub and in open camps—just a tarp covering bedding and other stuff. Although my mother had nine sons, two of them married, she still missed me because I had done a lot of work around the [186] camp. She didn't want me to live with the white man because she wanted me to be an Indian, like an old timer. She thought that after she died I would look after my sister [cousin]. She knew I was good hearted and kind.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

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857

A

B

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D

WORK, PLAY, AND SHOWBOAT RESIDENCE

[END PLATE 10]

their head or hair, for if they did so their hair would turn grey very early in life. No particular washes were used for body, face or hair. Girls slept in their lodges at night and seldom left them for long nor ventured very far away. However, most mornings girls went out of their lodges for a short time to walk and exercise. Just at dawn they made wishes and prayed for obtaining of their desires. They returned to their lodge soon afterwards before people were generally astir. Some girls washed their bodies at daybreak with their hands and prayed, saying "May my body always be clean and without smell. May I always be strong". No sponges or brushes of branches or twigs were used in washing. Some girls did not wash in creeks, etc. They blew their breath over their arms and bodies, saying "May I never smell. May my body always be clean". It seems girls did not spend much of the night roaming around nor travel far, as girls of the Nilak and some other tribes do, nor did they wash themselves frequently like them. The ceremonies performed by girls varied somewhat in different individuals, also some practised more ceremonies than others. This was the case even in older times. A peculiar custom was the carrying by girls of little bags into which they put all their mistakes, and evil words and thoughts etc. These little sacks were tied around the mouth with thong or sinew. If at any time during

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[515]

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Dease River
Tsetona

304 The use of lip plugs remains in doubt.
The nasal septum of a boy was pierced at about the age of seven, the hole being progressively enlarged with wooden plugs of various sizes. Nose ornaments continued to be worn into adulthood. A girl's mother pierced her daughter's ears around the age of ten, a porcupine quill being used for the initial operation. Some girls perforated their own ear lobes. To enlarge the hole, bone plugs of different sizes were applied. Nothing could be learned of tattooing, one informant even denying the practice.

515 Indians commonly washed their hands with a mixture of wood ashes and grease.
302 Human urine contained in birch-bark vessels supplied an effective detergent for cleaning clothes. Use of urine to wash the body was denied but the pattern is said to have occurred among the adjoining Tahltan.[30] People pared fingernails and made no special
514 effort to destroy the parings. Defecation and elimination constituted private matters, to which Indians attended in the bush. Only young children about two years old were permitted to urinate and defecate into birch bark vessels kept in the dwelling (in winter?). Following defecation the body was cleaned with moss and twigs.

291 *Tsetona.* Women sewed tanned-skin clothing with both awls and true needles of bone. Rabbit-skin line was plaited for garments but no frame aided the process. Gut and fish skins found no use in clothing manufacture.

A man's basic dress consisted of an open coat reaching to the thighs and fastened with stick buttons, trousers extending upward to the thighs and attached to an inner belt by tanned-skin thongs, and the breech cloth. Women wore dresses reaching to the middle of the calf together with knee length leggings secured with line. Moccasins and decorative outer belts completed the dress of both sexes. For winter weather men wore parkas of fully tanned hide, occasionally lined with fur. No use of the parka stretcher could be recalled. Mittens packed with muskrat fur kept hands warm, while moccasin duffel of goat's hair served a similar function for the lower extremities. Dry grass found no employment as duffel. Gloves remained unknown prior to contact. Use of moccasin and trouser or coat and trouser combinations failed to be recalled. A shaman did not dress distinctively. Clothing remained unwashed as long as it was in use.

A variety of hats shared popularity. The simplest type of headgear for both sexes consisted of an approximately triangular piece of tanned skin that was lined with muskrat or ground hog fur. In wearing these, the fur rested next to the head. The lower edges tied beneath the wearer's chin thus covering the ears and cheeks. "Stick hats," made of a piece of bent and sewn birch wood covered with marten or beaver skin tanned with the hair on, were also recalled. A very decorative hat for women consisted of a loon skin. Woven spruce-root caps could not be recalled.

291 Clothing decoration featured skin fringes, pieces of bone, fur, paint, and porcupine
531 quills. Fringes commonly appeared on mittens, coats, and dresses, being added to the collar as well as across the back of the latter garment. Lynx and other fur fringes contributed to the attractiveness of parka hoods and also appeared on other items of dress.

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everywhere in the Cassiar. According to Jenness the Tahltan rejected the labret of the coastal people while the Carrier readily accepted the same ornament. Jenness, *Indians of Canada* (1932), 372.

[30] The Tlingit (including the Chilkat), like many other Pacific Coast people, used urine as a detergent. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950), 192.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Frances Lake
Upper Liard
Dease River

pointed out that in illness all the wind did not leave the body—this would have caused death. To cure, a shaman blew some of his wind into the patient's body. No recollection of confession was admitted but Field's anecdote above suggests that practice. Sorcery sometimes resulted in death, or was believed to have that power. The avoidance on making snowshoes before snow lay on the ground obtained among the Frances Lake people as it did in the upper Liard Valley.

MEDICINE AND SURGERY

It appears that, compared to the magical rites discussed above, relatively less dogmatic attitudes governed the methods of therapy to be described in this section. Some of the techniques to be discussed may even have been supported by an awareness of their empirically verifiable relationship to the desired end.

Upper Liard Kaska. Charcoal rubbed under the eyes prevented snow blindness. To cure the affliction the sore eyes were bathed in infusions of alder or tamarack bark. No help for snow blindness came from the application of spruce gum nor was bleeding ever used for this purpose. Spruce gum helped to treat blisters, while the young flowers of the fireweed boiled in water provided a drink that relieved muscular pains. An unidentified white root (negata), with an odor as penetrating as horse-radish, growing in mountainous country cleared up head congestion resulting from colds. After grinding it and mixing it with grease, a sufferer breathed the root through each nostril in turn. Sweat baths afforded protection from colds. Both sexes took such baths regularly from about the age of ten. Men preceded women in the sweat lodge. Bathing in the sulphurous hot springs of the Cassiar possessed no therapeutic value.[a]

Dease River Kaska. People used balsam gum to staunch the flow of blood from a cut and then bound the wound with dry grass. The same substance applied to the inner corners of each eye relieved snow blindness without bandaging. Snow blindness was caused by small "white bugs" springing from the snow into the victim's eyes. Snow also harbored small black insects (ta'uctetla') that had no injurious effects on human beings.[b] A tourniquet prevented fatal bleeding in case of a severed artery. Animal grease or brains relieved the pain of burns. Broken bones were set by shamans, the limb being stretched and tightly bound with a layer of grass wrapped around with tanned-skin line. The casing remained in place for several months or until the break healed. Snowshoe "sickness," manifested by aching in the toes and insteps, could be relieved overnight by wrapping and binding the feet with grass. To thaw frozen parts of the body people gently rubbed snow on the affected part. Also the frosen organ might be immersed in extremely cold water. Remedies for toothache were denied. Emetics are probable but their nature could not be recalled precisely. To treat colds, urine in a vessel was heated with a hot pole. The patient then crouched over the liquid, his head covered with a skin, and inhaled the fumes. Presumably human urine is indicated.

[a] For some contemporary remedies, a few of which, like the inhalation of urine fumes, probably have roots in the aboriginal period, see Honigmann, *Culture and Ethos of Kaska Society* (1949), 247.

[b] "Small black worms" were thought by the Fort Nelson Slave to cause snow blindness. Honigmann, *Ethnography and Acculturation of the Fort Nelson Slave* (1946), 132.